



**DeVries: Better late than never.**

*"I am the most 'waivered' person ever to wear an Army uniform," DeVries said.*

*"I had an age waiver and a health waiver. They went through all this stuff to make it happen."*

**A**FTER a career as a world-renowned, pioneer heart surgeon, one would think **Dr. William C. DeVries** could kick back and enjoy some golf.

On the contrary, DeVries decided to serve in the armed forces.

At 57, the doctor who implanted the first permanent artificial heart, in Seattle dentist Barney Clark, signed on at Walter Reed Army Medical Center as a Defense Department contractor — and then joined the Army Reserve.

On Dec. 29, 2000, DeVries was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel. And on Jan. 18, 2002, he became one of the oldest officers to graduate from the Army Medical Department basic officer course.

"The story goes back to when I was born at the Brooklyn Naval Hospital in 1943," DeVries said. "My dad was a physician and surgeon, and a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve.

"Right after I was born, he went to sea," DeVries said. "Six months later, he was killed in the Battle of Hollandia in the South Pacific."

DeVries was "a sole surviving son" in military terms, but he didn't know it until he

tried to join the military during the Vietnam War.

But he was not destined to serve his country at that time. As a sole surviving son, military officials said, he couldn't be deployed to an active theater.

Because of an influx of draftees, they told him, they didn't need him.

The young doctor's subsequent medical career involved breakthroughs in modern medicine. In the early 1980s, he was instrumental in creating the artificial heart dubbed the "Jarvik 7."

Between 1982 and 1987 he implanted the Jarvik 7 in four patients who collectively lived more than 1,300 days. DeVries returned to traditional cardiovascular surgery in 1988 and retired a decade later.

Two years ago DeVries golfed with MG Evan Gaddis, then commander of the Army Recruiting Command.

"I was 56, had a nice home near Fort Knox, Ky., and was cutting back my practice," he said. "I was kind of disillusioned with medicine. Everybody was worried about their retirements, and the fun had gone out of it."

Gaddis invited DeVries to accompany him to Washington, D.C., where he introduced him to the WRAMC commander.

On the return flight, Gaddis made his pitch.

"He said, 'Someone with your talent and ability really could help the Army.'

"I started feeling guilty," DeVries said.

In October, DeVries joined Walter Reed's Department of Surgery as a consultant. Still, Gaddis wasn't satisfied. The general told the doctor: "There's one more thing you need to do. You need to wear green."

"I am the most 'waivered' person ever to wear an Army uniform," DeVries said. "I had an age waiver and a health waiver. They went through all this stuff to make it happen. I didn't really appreciate it too much until I went to the Officer Basic Course and it became a major deal. They didn't quite know how to handle me." — *Linda D. Kozaryn, American Forces Press Service*

**SGM Julius W. Chan** of the 82nd Airborne Division Support Command's Headquarters and HQs. Company at Fort Bragg, N.C., has been performing magic for more than a decade.

Although many of his shows are directed toward young orphans and children who are hospitalized, Chan, who has two sons of his own, performs shows for adults and military units as well. He currently gives one magic show on the first of every month at Fort Bragg's Womack Army Medical Center, during payday activities.

When Chan is on stage, he's humorous and warm, said SGM Charles J. Chan, the magician's older brother and chief medical NCO of HHC, XVIII Airborne Corps. "He helps put the audience at ease and encourages them to participate."

The best thing about performing magic is the resulting expressions on the children's faces, Julius Chan said. "I like to make a difference in the kids' lives. And, I think I do; when I finish a performance, they don't want me to go."

Once Chan hosted a magic show during a unit Christmas party to benefit the homeless. In return for the show, he asked members of the audience to donate an old toy or clothing item.

"Not only did he make the Christmas party a success, but he also made many homeless people happy on Christmas day," Charles Chan said. — *PFC Heather Boyne, 82nd Abn. Div. Public Affairs Office*



**Chan:  
Performing  
magic.**



**Easley: Mrs. Hawaii.**

**Tara Easley** has a very specific outlook on life: "I want to be a dedicated wife, committed to a lifelong relationship in marriage." It was good enough to convince a panel of judges that she should be crowned "Mrs. Hawaii International" for 2002.

The 24-year-old wife of 1LT Brian Easley, executive officer of the Army Corps of Engineers' Pacific Ocean Division, represented Hawaii in the national competition in August, in Tennessee.

A second-grade teacher at Lanakila Baptist Elementary School in Waipahu, Easley hopes her victory will help set an example for other military wives who are considering getting involved in the community.

She selected arts education in Hawaii as her "platform" area of emphasis as the reigning Mrs. Hawaii. Easley will work with pageant administrators to take the message to the classroom when she visits other schools to help host art appreciation days.

Easley feels fortunate to have been selected to represent the state, since she was the only contestant who is a military wife.

"There is a tremendous feeling of acceptance to receive such an honor," she said. "I take my selection very seriously and will try to give something back to the community." — *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pacific Ocean Division, PAO*

---

*Easley feels fortunate to have been selected to represent the state, since she was the only contestant who is a military wife.*

---